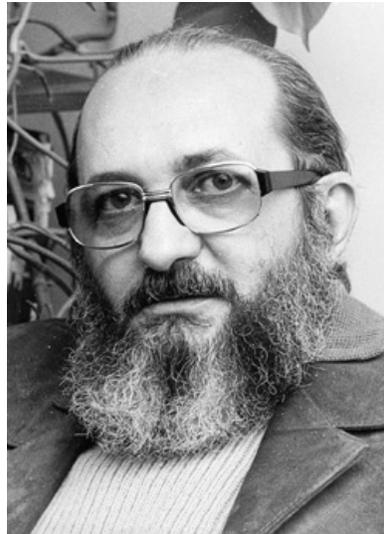


PAULO FREIRE

CATEGORY : EDUCATION, RACE



Paulo Freire was born in 1921 in Recife, Brazil. He became familiar with poverty and hunger during the 1929 Great Depression. In school he fell behind and his social life revolved around playing pick up football with poorer kids, from whom he learned a great deal. These experiences would shape his concerns for the poor and would help to construct his particular educational viewpoint.

Freire enrolled at Law School at the University of Recife in 1943. He also studied philosophy, more specifically phenomenology, and the psychology of language. Freire never actually practiced law but instead worked as a teacher in secondary schools teaching Portuguese. In 1944, he married Elza Maia Costa de Oliveira, a fellow teacher.

In 1946, Freire was appointed Director of the Department of Education and Culture of the Social Service in the State of Pernambuco, the Brazilian state of which Recife is the capital. Working primarily among the illiterate poor, Freire began to embrace a non-orthodox form of what could be considered liberation theology. In Brazil at that time, literacy was a requirement for voting in presidential elections.

*In 1961, he was appointed director of the Department of Cultural Extension of Recife University, and in 1962 he had the first opportunity for significant application of his theories, when 300 sugarcane workers were taught to read and write in just 45 days. In response to this experiment, the Brazilian government approved the creation of thousands of cultural circles across the country. In 1964, a military coup put an end to that effort. Freire was imprisoned as a traitor for 70 days. After a brief exile in Bolivia, he worked in Chile for five years for the Christian Democratic Agrarian Reform Movement and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. In 1967, he published his first book, *Education as the Practice of Freedom*. He followed this with his most famous book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, first published in Portuguese in 1968.*

*Freire was offered a visiting professorship at Harvard University in 1969. The next year, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* was published in both Spanish and English, vastly expanding its reach. Because of the political feud between Freire, a Christian socialist, and the successive authoritarian military dictatorships, it wasn't published in his own country of Brazil until 1974. After a year in the United States, Freire moved to Switzerland to work as a special education advisor to the World Council of Churches. During this time he acted as an advisor on education reform in former Portuguese colonies in Africa, particularly Guinea Bissau and Mozambique.*

Freire moved back to Brazil in 1980. He joined the Workers' Party in the city of São Paulo, and acted as a supervisor for its adult literacy project from 1980 to 1986. When the Party prevailed in the municipal elections in 1988, Freire was appointed Secretary of Education for São Paulo. In 1986, his wife Elza died. Freire married Ana Maria Araújo Freire, who continues with her own educational work.

Paulo Freire died in 1997.

Photo: Paulo Freire. kdfrases.com. Web Oct 31st 2014.

Source: About Paulo Freire. [pedagogy of the oppressed](http://pedagogyoftheoppressed.com). Web Oct 31st 2014.

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